

BOROUGH OF COLCHESTER



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

JOHN D. KERSHAW

M.D., B.S., London ; M.R.C.S., England ;
L.R.C.P., London, D.P.H.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

PORT MEDICAL OFFICER

DIVISIONAL SCHOOL MEDICAL OFFICER

AREA MEDICAL OFFICER

CONSULTANT IN INFECTIOUS DISEASES

MYLAND HOSPITAL, COLCHESTER

1959

BOROUGH OF



COLCHESTER

BOROUGH AND PORT HEALTH COMMITTEE, 1959

THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR

COUNCILLOR A. W. J. KAY

Chairman :

COUNCILLOR I. T. BROWN

Deputy-Chairman :

COUNCILLOR MRS. G. B. ENOCH

Members :

ALDERMAN MISS K. E. SANDERS, A.R.R.C., J.P.

COUNCILLOR BRIGADIER D. F. PANTON, C.B.E.

ALDERMAN C. E. CHILD

COUNCILLOR C. W. PELL

COUNCILLOR W. C. LEE

COUNCILLOR W. E. SANDFORD

THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT, 1959

PART-TIME STAFF

Medical Officer of Health, etc. :

JOHN D. KERSHAW, M.D., B.S.(LOND.), D.P.H.

Assistant Medical Officers :

ELEANOR M. SINGER, M.SC., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.C.H.

R. E. BARRETT, M.B., B.S., D.T.M. & H., D.P.H.(LOND.) (to February)

W. A. GARSON, L.M.S.S.A. (from October)

Public Analyst :

J. E. WOODHEAD, B.SC., F.I.C., PH.C.

WHOLE-TIME STAFF

Senior Public Health Inspector :

†* L. H. ENGLAND

Deputy Senior Public Health Inspector :

†* O. R. WARNER

Additional Public Health Inspectors :

†* C. J. JACOBI † E. R. SWIFT

† R. G. MORLEY † P. CUTTS

† A. T. G. PEPPER (to 20.6.59)

† Public Health Inspector's Certificate.

* Meat Inspector's Certificate.

Clerks :

R. D. SARGEANT, A.C.C.S.

L. G. NICHOLLS M. ROWLAND

Disinfector :

A. E. CUDMORE

Rodent Operators :

W. CHAPMAN (part of year), W. I. HAWKINS

Telephone No.

Colchester 5101, Extns. 8 and 73

(Night line 3107)

HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
TRINITY STREET,
COLCHESTER.

October, 1960.

MR. MAYOR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present to you my Annual Report for 1959.

Vital Statistics

There is not much cause for comment in the statistics for the year. The birth rate at 16.9 is almost identical with that of 1958 and fractionally above the average for England and Wales as a whole. The death rate is a little higher than in 1958, but still below the national average and the same applies to the infant mortality rate. As I have said in other years, in a town of moderate size slight variations from year to year in these rates are not significant. What matters is the trend over a period of years and when the figures are looked at in this light, Colchester is much more favourably placed than the average.

Infectious Disease

Once again measles was the most prevalent infectious disease with 689 cases as against 440 last year. The disease was, however, of a mild type and where complications occurred they generally responded well to treatment, only three of the 689 patients requiring admission to hospital. Poliomyelitis provided only one case as against six in 1958. This is interesting because the summer was a hot and dry one and it is in hot, dry summers that one normally expects the disease to be prevalent. I felt that the improvement in 1958 was probably in some degree due to the effect of vaccination and the virtual absence of the disease in 1959 confirms me in the belief that vaccination is proving effective.

The vaccination campaign was continued during the year and I am glad to say that a substantial response was obtained among adolescents and young adults. As more vaccine has become available the vaccination scheme has been extended to further groups of adults and though the older the age group the less eager the response, the public in general have registered at least as readily in Colchester as in other parts of the country.

The disease is not "dead" and small outbreaks did in fact occur in some parts of England and Wales. Since Colchester is a town to which people come from all over the country, the infection may be brought in at any time and anyone may be exposed, so that it is very wise indeed for as many people as possible to seek vaccination.

Care of the Elderly

In a town which contains a large number of old people the special problems which beset the elderly need attention. In my view we are certainly not behindhand in making provision for the care of the old people, but I am not sure that all our efforts are quite as well co-ordinated as they might be. For example, the housing of old people in Colchester is the responsibility of the Borough Council, but the provision of nursing care and domestic help rests with the County Council Health Department, general welfare provision with the County Council Welfare Department and hospital care with the Hospital Management Committee. There are, of course, in addition various voluntary bodies which are making very useful efforts to supplement Local Authority and Hospital services. To a certain extent this fragmentation can be overcome by personal contact and I have no doubt that the facts that I happen to hold the post of Area Medical Officer under the County Council and am a member of the Hospital Management Committee, help to bridge the gaps. As an officer of the Borough Council and the County Council, I can influence day to day activities but, of course, policy is very properly a matter for elected members and co-ordination of policy as between different authorities always presents problems. I hope that when Colchester acquires delegated powers in 1961, so that the Borough Council assumes a measure of direct responsibility for health and welfare services, the position may improve.

Co-operation between the voluntary organisations and the local authorities has not, I fear, been all that I could wish, but I think that some of the shortcomings can be ascribed to the division of administration so that the voluntary bodies have never been quite sure which official agency they ought to co-operate with to serve any particular purpose. During the year first steps were taken to bring the voluntary organisations together, and I think we are now coming within sight of an understanding which should be firmer in and after 1961.

Hospitals and hostels for the elderly have their place, but old people value their independence and indeed the knowledge that they can be independent helps to keep them going. Anything that the public service can do to support this independence is well worthwhile and there are quite a number of things that are worth serious consideration. The following seem particularly important.

1. In my last Annual Report I mentioned the subject of "service flatlets" which would give single old people, or perhaps some elderly couples small, easily run living quarters where they could have some of their own treasured furniture, but in which main meals, heavy cleaning and a certain amount of personal attendance for those who were not fully physically fit would be provided. I was pleased by the ready acceptance of the principle and I hope that it will not be too long before we are able to implement the practice. Even as this report is being written, the news has come to hand that a neighbouring authority has started its first project on these lines.

2. For many years I have wondered whether we might not set up a "meals on wheels" service. Old people living alone have difficulty in shopping and difficulty in cooking and they often tend to give themselves an inadequate or unsuitable diet. The Home Help Service is doing something to remedy this, but there are obvious difficulties in the way of arranging for all the old people who are in need to have domestic helps at the same time of day to cook a mid-day meal for them! If, as other towns have done, we can provide a service which will allow old people living alone to have a nutritious hot mid-day meal at a reasonable price delivered to their house, even on three or four days a week, we shall give them substantial assistance. When I first took this matter up I found that while there would be little difficulty in getting meals cooked and supplied cheaply, it would be virtually impossible to arrange for their delivery. Colchester is a town which spreads out widely and even if transport could be arranged, the cost of carrying meals long distances from a central kitchen to the outskirts of the town would be prohibitive. I am glad to say that a group of voluntary workers are at present studying the problem and hope with voluntary help in transport and organisation to set up a small experimental scheme in one part of the town. If it is successful it may very well extend to other parts.

3. A number of old people who, while not seriously ill, are partially disabled by illness, can be looked after in their own homes with the assistance of Home Helps and the district nurses, if certain difficulties can be overcome. One is that incontinence often accompanies infirmity in old age so that soiled and stained clothing and bedding has to be dealt with. To do this would tax the ability of fit people in well-appointed houses and it is a severe strain on an elderly wife in housing accommodation which is sometimes far from ideal. I think it would be worth our while to look into the possibility of doing what some other towns have done and provide a municipally assisted and sponsored scheme for washing these things.

I feel that I should also mention an experiment that actually began in Colchester toward the end of 1959. Experiments in other places show that advisory clinics where old people can go or be

taken for a regular check by an interested doctor can be useful. Not only do they sometimes ensure the early detection of illness at a stage when it can be treated, but they help the old people to regulate their lives in accordance with their needs and possibilities; perhaps this health education function is the one that really matters. Dr. Singer, one of our Medical Officers, is very interested in the subject and an experimental clinic has been started at the Culver Street Combined Treatment Centre under her direction. It is too early to comment yet on the results which are being obtained, but this Clinic is beginning to find popularity and I think that in the long run it will greatly justify itself and be worth expanding to provide for other parts of the town.

General

Once again it is a pleasure to comment on the high degree of co-operation which the Department has received from virtually everyone with whom it has come into contact in its work. It would be too much to expect that everyone should do everything that we could wish; there will always be people who from lack of understanding, ignorance or carelessness make our work a little more complicated or difficult than it need be. None the less, we rarely ask for help without its being given.

I sometimes feel that the public in general might be a little readier to bring problems to us. Our staff is limited and we cannot be expected to have someone on the spot whenever anything happens which might require our attention. Particularly in matters of food hygiene and food poisoning the man or woman in the street can do useful service both to us and the community by bringing to our notice anything which they may regard as unsatisfactory or undesirable. I have repeatedly said in these reports that many cases of illness due to food infection are not reported to the Department and if they were it would enable us to find and deal with the sources of trouble at once. We are at the service of the public and they need never be afraid of asking us to help them.

The staff of the Department have continued to maintain high standards of efficiency, even when circumstances have been unfavourable. Our colleagues in other departments have been as helpful as usual and I would particularly mention the understanding assistance which the Housing Department has given us in many difficult cases. The consistent and constructive interest of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and members of the Borough and Port Health Committee has been a great support throughout the year.

I remain, Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN D. KERSHAW,

Medical Officer of Health, etc.

Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1959

A Report as directed by Circular 1/60 of the Ministry of Health

STATISTICAL SUMMARY

Population (R.G. Estimate) with Military (at 30/6/59)	63,980
(Census 1951, 57,449)	
Area	12,037 acres
Number of inhabited houses (Census 1951) ..	15,069
Number of inhabited caravans (Census 1951) ..	69
Number of inhabited houses at 31/12/59 (estimated)	18,663
Rateable Value (1/4/59)	£824,351
Product of a penny rate	£3,350
Birth Rate (1,008 legitimate births, 60 illegitimate)	
(Corrected)	16·9
(Crude)	16·69
„ „ England and Wales	16·5
Stillbirths (18) Rate per thousand live and stillbirths	16·9
England and Wales	20·7
Death Rate per 1,000 of the population (Corrected)	10·9
(Crude)	12·48
„ „ England and Wales	11·6
Percentage of total deaths occurring in Public Institutions	58·9
Women dying in, or in consequence of, childbirth	Nil
Infantile mortality rate per 1,000 related live births—	
Legitimate (19 deaths), 18·8. Illegitimate (2 deaths), 33·3. Total (21 deaths)	19·7
Infantile Mortality Rate, England and Wales ..	22·0
Pulmonary Tuberculosis Death Rate	0·06
Other Tuberculosis Diseases Death Rate	0·00
Cancer Death Rate	2·1
Neonatal Death Rate (15 deaths)	14·0
Neonatal Death Rate, England and Wales ..	15·8

DEATHS OF CIVILIAN RESIDENTS, 1959

<i>Cause of Death.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Respiratory Tuberculosis	3	1	4
Syphilitic Disease	—	1	1
Other Infections	—	1	1
Cancer, Stomach	6	10	16
,, Lung, Bronchus	21	1	22
,, Breast	—	18	18
,, Uterus	—	8	8
,, Other sites	31	35	66
Leukæmia	4	—	4
Diabetes	1	3	4
Vascular Lesions, Nervous System ..	38	52	90
Coronary Disease, Angina	72	59	131
Hypertension with Heart Disease.. ..	5	15	20
Other Heart Disease	42	85	127
Other Circulatory Disease	15	14	29
Influenza	15	8	23
Pneumonia	32	23	55
Bronchitis	24	9	33
Other Respiratory Diseases	6	2	8
Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum	5	2	7
Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhœa	5	2	7
Nephritis and Nephrosis	2	2	4
Hyperplasia of Prostate	3	—	3
Congenital Malformations	2	2	4
Other defined diseases	38	44	82
Motor Vehicle Accidents	6	1	7
All other Accidents.. .. .	5	6	11
Suicide	5	5	10
Homicide, etc.	1	—	1
	387	412	799

1959. DEATHS OF COLCHESTER RESIDENTS OVER 70 YEARS OF AGE

	Aged 70 and under 80	Aged 80 and under 90	Aged 90 and over	Total
Male	109	74	9	192
Female	124	127	16	267
Total	233	201	25	459

Eight persons were aged 90, five aged 91, four aged 92, two aged 93, one aged 94, two aged 95, one aged 96, one aged 97 and one aged 98. The latter was a male.

LABORATORY, 1959

Specimen and Examination.	Positive.	Negative.	Total.
Urine, abnormalities	14	333	347
Blood, anthrax	—	1	1

Examination of salmon containing suspected glass. Proved harmless crystals of magnesium ammonium phosphate only.

Examination of bread showed rare mould (this verified by Mr. Woodhead).

Examination of chips found in pie which were considered to be of painted formicate.

In addition 144 samples of water were bacteriologically examined, and 1 for presence of tidal water.

	Samples	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Town Water Supply ..	141	140	1
Other Water	3	3	—

Two samples of well water were submitted to the Counties Public Health Laboratory for chemical analysis. The result of one was regarded as showing a very inferior condition for a well water. The other was considered satisfactory.

This laboratory also checked some scale from an aluminium kettle connected with the last sample, finding therein 1.6 per cent of copper.

Examinations by the Public Health Laboratory Service (Ipswich) numbered 26 Bacteriological (19 satisfactory and 7 unsatisfactory).

NURSING HOMES

General and surgical beds available are 14.

There are two Homes registered in the Borough.

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during the
Year 1959

(Civilian and Military Cases)

Disease	Total Cases Notified	Total Cases in Age Groups												Cases admitted to Hospital
		Under 1 Year	1	2	3	4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-34	35-44	45-64	65 and Over	
Measles . . .	689	11	74	81	75	81	340	21	3	3	—	—	—	3
Acute Encephalitis ..	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Acute Poliomyelitis ..	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
Meningococcal Infection ..	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
Pneumonia ..	27	—	—	1	—	—	1	2	1	6	4	8	4	3
Dysentery ..	19	1	3	1	—	—	3	2	4	5	—	—	—	10
Puerperal Pyrexia ..	16	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	11	2	—	—	1
Erysipelas ..	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	1	3	1
Scarlet Fever ..	66	—	—	4	8	6	43	5	—	—	—	—	—	2
Infectious Hepatitis ..	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—
Suspected Food Poisoning ..	7	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	2	—	2	1	1
Whooping Cough	8	1	—	—	—	—	6	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals ..	843	13	77	88	83	87	394	31	13	30	7	12	8	24

Deaths from notified diseases : Pneumonia 2, Infective Hepatitis 1.

Deaths from unnotified diseases : Pneumonia 43.

Total deaths from infectious diseases : 46.

Percentage of cases treated in Hospital—2·8 per cent.

During the year 51 cases of various diseases and illnesses were treated in the Isolation Hospital from the Borough of Colchester, as can be seen from the table given below:

Scarlet Fever.. ..	3
Sonne Dysentery	1
Pneumonia (1 died) ..	3
Poliomyelitis	1
Measles	1
Rubella	3
Gastro-enteritis	4
Upper Respiratory Infection	8
Acute Sinusitis	1
Vaccinal Encephalitis	1
Herpes Zoster	1
Tonsillitis	1
Pharyngitis	1
Scabies	2
Erysipelas	1
Mumps	2
Encephalitis after Measles	1
Cellulitis of Face	1
Meningitis	1
Puerperal Sepsis	1
Virus Infection	2
Glandular Fever	1
Puerperal Fever	1
Intestinal Obstruction	1
Toxic Rash	1
Chicken Pox	2
Salmonella Infection	3
Cerebral Thrombosis (died).. ..	1
Undiagnosed	1

Two Borough cases of Scarlet Fever and one of Measles were transferred from outside hospitals where the children were undergoing other treatment.

Tuberculosis

Age Periods	New Cases				Deaths			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under 1 .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
1 .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
2-4 .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
5-9	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
10-14.. ..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
15-19.. ..	1	1	1	1	..	..	..	..
20-24.. ..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
25-34.. ..	1	5	..	..	..	..	..	..
35-44.. ..	3	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
45-54.. ..	2	1	..	..	..	1	..	..
55-64.. ..	4	1	..	..	2	..	..	..
65 and upwards	2	1	..	..	1	..	..	..
Totals	16	10	2	2	3	1	..	..

Tuberculosis Register

	1956	1957	1958	1959
Pulmonary Cases	315	310	317	331
Other Forms of Tuberculosis ..	37	34	33	32

Prevention and Treatment of Tuberculosis.

Section 172, Public Health Act, 1936.

Prevention and Treatment of Blindness.

Section 176, Public Health Act, 1936.

National Assistance Act, 1948.

Section 47.

One case was removed under the powers contained in this Act. She was an elderly woman living alone. She had been found unconscious on occasions owing to slight cerebral vascular lesions and was in need of care and attention. The cottage in which she resided was subject to action under the Housing Act, 1957, and she would have been quite incapable of looking after herself in fresh accommodation. She was allowed to remain, however, under the watchful eye of a good neighbour until her condition deteriorated to such an extent that hospital care was imperative. She was admitted to St. Mary's Hospital on 8th September and was later transferred to Heath Hospital, Tendring. The M.O. of this hospital has notified the Health Department that she will never be in a fit state to leave hospital (February, 1960).

CREMATIONS, 1959

<i>Died in Month</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Residents</i>	<i>Non- Residents</i>	<i>Dr. Kershaw</i>	<i>Form F Signed by</i>			<i>Dr. Alderton</i>
					<i>Dr. Barrett</i>	<i>Dr. Singer</i>		
January ..	70	18	52	60	5	5	—	—
February ..	83	28	65	65	18	—	—	—
March ..	73	14	59	69	—	4	—	—
April ..	67	18	49	34	—	19	14	—
May ..	62	21	41	51	—	9	2	—
June ..	66	17	49	46	—	2	18	—
July ..	54	12	42	29	—	3	22	—
August ..	57	16	41	40	—	14	3	—
September ..	51	16	35	27	—	5	19	—
October ..	65	14	51	58	—	7	—	—
November ..	76	19	57	64	—	12	—	—
December ..	80	15	65	76	—	3	—	—
Totals ..	804	208	596	620	23	83	78	—

Essex 760, Suffolk 30, London 8, Other Areas 6—Total 804.

Coroner's Cases :	January 10	April 3	July 4
90	February 4	May 4	August 9
	March 5	June 14	September 8
			October 10
			November 8
			December 11

Essex County Council Act, 1933.

Eight establishments are registered under the above Act for massage or special treatment.

PET ANIMALS ACT, 1951

Five sets of premises were registered as at 1/1/60.

HOUSING APPLICATIONS, 1959

Number of applications accepted for re-housing supported by medical certificates	59
Number of such cases re-housed during year	77

MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS OF BOROUGH EMPLOYEES FOR SUPERANNUATION OR FOR ROAD TRAFFIC ACT PURPOSES DURING 1959

Primary Examinations	62 passed, 1 failed
Examinations after absences ..	3
Examinations for commuting pension	1
Examinations for other authorities ..	4

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

Three new Cesspools were authorised to be built by the Borough Engineer's Department during the year.

Nine dwellings were connected to water main extension in Ipswich Road and well supply discontinued.

Water.

The consumption per head per day, including water supplied to the Military, was 42.24 gallons. The length of pumping distribution mains is 127.898 miles. There are 566 metered supplies of water.

Refuse Collection and Disposal.

No changes in this service during the year.

Swimming Baths.

There are three swimming baths in the Borough. Two of these are open-air and one indoor heated.

1. Colchester Borough Council's Open-Air Swimming Pool.

This is situated at Colne Bank Avenue which is part of the Colchester By-Pass Road. The source of water for the original filling in May of each year is the River Colne, which was diverted from its original course in order that the pool could be constructed. The capacity of the pool is 500,000 gallons, over an area of 55 yards by 30 yards, varying in depth from 3ft. to 8ft. plus two flanking paddling pools.

Under normal conditions the plant can filter and return the contents of the pool in a closed circuit in 6 hours. A $\frac{3}{4}$ in. mains supply of town water is used in connection with the chlorinating plant, and this provides most of the additional water required to make up the loss caused by evaporation, leakage, etc., but as necessary, additional water can be drawn from the adjacent river.

The filtration plant is in operation during the time that the pool is open to the public and, if necessary, for longer periods. The aim is to run on "break-point" chlorination, but during periods of exceptional weather when the pool is heavily patronised, this is not always possible. During filtration the water is drawn from the pool, mixed with the freshly chlorinated town water, passed through the filter tanks containing graded sand and sulphate of aluminium, aerated, impregnated with "Brakol" to maintain the pH value of the water, and returned to the pool. The filters are backwashed up to 4 times a week as necessary.

Footbaths are provided at the exits from the dressing rooms to the pool. These are sterilized with chloride of lime and emptied manually at frequent intervals.

During the season of May-September samples are submitted to the Health Department for bacteriological analyses. Results have shown consistently good control hygiene.

2. Open-Air bath at Colchester Royal Grammar School.

This is situated at the main school premises in Lexden Road. It is filled from the mains and is filtered all the time by a filtration plant which is kept in thorough working order. The condition of the water is checked by a special apparatus so it is not normally necessary to change the water during the season. No bacteriological check is made by the Health Department.

Apart from school use the bath is also used by the Colchester Swimming Club for lessons to children during two evenings per week during the summer. Other users include some old boys of the school, and, once a week a party of the older girls from the County High School and by nurses from the nearby hospital.

3. Colchester Garrison Swimming Bath.

This is situated on Circular Road, South, Abbey Fields. This swimming bath is 100ft. long by 50ft. wide with depths varying from 3ft. 3in. to 7ft., with a capacity of approximately 160,000 gallons. The water used for filling is drawn from the Borough of Colchester mains and is heated, filtered and chlorinated during use.

Purification is by a continuous flow system with complete turn-over every four hours approximately. Pump capacity, 650 gallons min. Readings are taken daily by pool staff and also by visiting hygiene assistants, R.A.M.C. The pH value remains steady at 7.6 and water temperature is maintained at 72 degrees F.

Chlorine content at inlet (shallow end) .5 ppm., middle .3 ppm. outlet (deep end) .3 ppm.

Bacteriological results from each of these three parts of the pool showed less than 1 E. Coli per 100 ml. of water in each case (10.3.60).

The pool is emptied annually for cleaning and re-painting. This year it was not re-painted throughout because new paints have been applied in certain areas to test for durability. The bottom of the deep end has been skimmed with a fine mix concrete for the same reason.

4. Tentative enquiries have been made by the Headmaster of the Endsleigh House School for the construction of a swimming bath, and consents have been obtained from the Council. So far no work has been put in hand on the project.

CLEARANCE OF UNFIT HOUSES IN COLCHESTER: A FIFTY-YEARS RECORD

House to house inspection began in Colchester in 1905, and whilst many houses were improved by the service of informal notices requiring repairs, no powers existed for closing or demolishing. Under the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1909, came the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910, and the first houses considered unfit for human habitation were brought to the notice of the Health Committee towards the end of the year for action under statutory powers.

The first two houses demolished stood in Trinity Street, midway between the Church and Scheregate Steps. This pair had stood empty and derelict for some time and the owner was unknown. A Council Department therefore carried out the demolition.

Housing slum clearance was halted when the First World War intervened, and in the years 1915-1921 inclusive (seven years), no cases were brought to Committee.

In 1919 another Housing and Town Planning Act appeared and resumption of work under this took place in 1922. The three Housing Acts of 1925, 1930 and 1936 widened the scope of the work and grants enabled the Council to provide subsidised alternative accommodation for persons displaced from condemned properties. In the Second World War, however, the possible need of temporary shelter for bombed out families caused the work to lapse for a second period of seven years, from 1941 to 1947 inclusive.

Under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1953, Local Authorities were enabled to deal with those houses listed under the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947, as being of architectural interest and to close them to human habitation whilst at the same time preserving them for use as offices or stores.

The Housing Act of 1957 has kept the best of the provisions of the earlier Acts and most of the work today proceeds under this.

If an allowance is made for there being only four months in 1910 when the Regulations operated, and for the 14 years lost on account of the two wars, about $35\frac{1}{2}$ years of active work has been possible. During such time many houses have come before the Committee, some of them on several occasions. Long before the advent of Clearance areas blocks of cottages were demolished and entire shut-in yards wiped out. Thirteen houses in Northgate Street and twelve in Sheepen Road disappeared, whilst thirteen and eleven went down in Cistern Yard, North Hill, and Branches Cottages, Mersea Road respectively. Four more yards, consisting of 9 dwellings, one of 8, two of 7, and six of 6 vanished. Twenty-nine smaller yards, usually consisting of two to five houses were dealt with by total demolition. Names of these bygone alleys, courts and yards are preserved in a booklet on Colchester street names compiled by the late Alderman E. Alec Blaxill, and published by Benham and Co. Ltd., in 1936.

The streets losing the greatest numbers of dwellings are Vineyard Street, Priory Street, Magdalen Street, Hythe Hill, Greenstead Road, Harwich Road and Fingringhoe Road in that order.

One area was scheduled as a Clearance Area and in it seven buildings were demolished. This was St. Helen's Lane, off Maidenburgh Street, where now stand Council flats.

The Health Committee has granted deferment on request in some cases, but no appeal against final action has ever been lodged. Owners, mortgagees, or agents have always had the opportunity to meet the Committee before the fate of the property they control is decided. As well as by official action quite an amount of private demolition of old, uneconomic dwelling accommodation goes on. Generally lock-up shops or garages are built on the site, but sometimes a new dwelling appears. Altogether 655 dwellings (including two caravans and four parts of houses) have been brought forward for consideration.

Their ultimate fate is summed up in this table:

Demolished in pursuance of Orders	549
Demolished by owners in anticipation of formal procedure	27
Closed	17
Closed (parts of houses)	4
Undertakings not to re-let until made fit; fitness checked and undertaking cancelled ..	45
Undertaking not yet cancelled	2
Demolition Orders on houses still standing ..	10
Action deferred by Committee	1
	<hr/>
	655
	<hr/>

The figures give a clear indication of the nature of Colchester's housing problems up to the present. The town has never had any substantial slum districts and the picture has been one of single houses and small groups of houses falling into decline. I do not foresee any radical change in the near future, but it is quite probable that the number of houses needing clearance will exceed the former average of about 18 per working year. A large number of houses built during the years when the town was expanding in the latter part of the nineteenth century are beginning to come to the end of their useful lives and the new survey which the Department is making will probably show that many of these are not worth the cost of bringing them into satisfactory condition. This is all to the good. Housing standards develop as time goes on and houses which were considered adequate for the eighteen-sixties are quite unsuitable for anyone who wants to live by the standards of the nineteen-sixties. There can be no "Dutch Quarter" scheme for those houses to which I now refer; neither grace nor solidity went into their making and their passing will be unlamented.

SANITARY INSPECTION

General Summary of Work carried out by Public Health Inspector's Department under Public Health Acts, Housing Acts, By-laws, etc.

Defects found	..	..	..	..	..	2,009
Defects remedied	..	..	..	..	..	2,329
Factories and Workshops inspected	..	..	..	..	..	481

Housing.

Sinks, Waste Pipes, etc., provided or renewed	..	..	..	..	16
Floors or walls or ceilings repaired	..	..	..	..	195
Doors or windows provided or repaired	..	..	..	..	364
Ovens or firegrates repaired or renewed	..	..	..	..	25
Stairs repaired	..	..	..	..	23
Rooms cleansed	..	..	..	..	204
Roofs repaired (including rain-pipes and gutters)	..	..	..	..	155
Chimneys repaired or renewed	..	..	..	..	45
Damp houses remedied	..	..	..	..	28
Yards paved or repaired	..	..	..	..	8
Other housing repairs	..	..	..	..	30

Drainage.

Repairs and improvements	..	..	..	..	289
Water Closets provided or repaired	..	..	..	..	128
Cesspools : abolished (-), provided (-), repaired (-)	..	..	..	..	—

Other Sanitary Work.

Under Shops Act	..	..	..	..	14
Under Factories Act	..	..	..	..	97
Under Food and Drugs Act	..	..	..	..	390
Houses disinfected	..	..	..	..	8
Clothing and other articles disinfected	..	..	..	..	2,626
Mains supply provided to existing houses	..	..	..	..	7
Well water sampled	..	..	..	..	23
Dustbins provided	..	..	..	..	9
Re-visits in connection with Sanitary Notices	..	..	..	..	4,434
Offensive accumulations removed	..	..	..	..	12
Matters referred to other Departments	..	..	..	..	228
Other nuisances or matters attended to	..	..	..	..	37

FACTORIES ACT, 1937

Prescribed particulars on the administration of the Factories Act, 1937

PART I OF THE ACT

1.—INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Public Health Inspectors).

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	41	37	—	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	406	444	6	—
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	—	—	—	—
Total ..	447	481	6	—

2.—CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness (S.1) ..	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S.2)	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (S.4) ..	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)					
(a) insufficient	1	2	—	—	—
(b) unsuitable or defective ..	32	27	—	5	—
(c) not separate for sexes ..	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork)	—	—	—	—	—
Total ..	33	29	—	5	—

PART VIII OF THE ACT

OUTWORK

(Sections 110 and 111)

Nature of Work	Section 110			Section 111		
	No. of outworkers in August list required by Sect. 110 (1) (c)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in unwholesome places	Notices served	Prosecutions
Wearing } Making, etc.	57	—	—	—	—	—
apparel } Cleaning and washing	—	—	—	—	—	—
Household linen	1	—	—	—	—	—
Lace, lace curtains and nets	—	—	—	—	—	—
Curtains and furniture hangings	8	—	—	—	—	—
Furniture and upholstery	4	—	—	—	—	—
Electro-plate	—	—	—	—	—	—
File making	—	—	—	—	—	—
Brass and brass articles	—	—	—	—	—	—
Fur pulling	—	—	—	—	—	—
Iron and steel cables and chains	—	—	—	—	—	—
Iron and steel anchors and grapnels	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cart gear	—	—	—	—	—	—
Locks, latches and keys	—	—	—	—	—	—
Umbrellas, etc.	—	—	—	—	—	—
Artificial flowers	—	—	—	—	—	—
Nets, other than wire nets	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tents	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sacks	—	—	—	—	—	—
Racquet and tennis balls	—	—	—	—	—	—
Paper bags	—	—	—	—	—	—
The making of boxes or other receptacles or parts thereof made wholly or partially of paper	—	—	—	—	—	—
Brush making	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pea picking	—	—	—	—	—	—
Feather sorting	—	—	—	—	—	—
Carding, etc., of buttons	—	—	—	—	—	—
Stuffed toys	—	—	—	—	—	—
Basket making	—	—	—	—	—	—
Chocolates and sweetmeats	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cosaques, Christmas crackers, Christmas stockings, etc.	—	—	—	—	—	—
Textile weaving	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lampshades	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	70	—	—	—	—	—

OFFENSIVE TRADES AND KNACKER'S YARD

	Number.	Inspections.
Gut Scraper	1	9
Tallow Melter	1	8
Rag, Bone and Skin Dealer	5	3
Bone Boiler	1	8
Tripe Boiler	1	24
Total	9	52
Horse Slaughterer	1	6

These occupations have been carried out satisfactorily and no complaints have been received during the year.

COMMON LODGING HOUSE

There is one Common Lodging House in the Borough, providing accommodation for 27 lodgers. Inspections have been made on various occasions and cleansing and maintenance have been attended to satisfactorily.

ERADICATION OF BED BUGS

Dwelling Houses Infested—Council 5, Others 21	26
Dwelling Houses Disinfested—Council 5, Others 21	26
Rooms in these—Infested and Disinfested	83

In addition 19 dwelling houses, including three Council houses were treated for the eradication of fleas.

Disinfestation of dwelling houses is carried out free of charge.

RATS AND MICE

During the year 2,648 inspections and re-inspections were made by the Rodent Operators.

Four hundred and three complaints of rat infestation were received and dealt with and altogether some 547 premises were cleared during the year.

The public sewers were treated twice during the year and poison laid in those manholes where takes of pre-bait had been recorded. Sixty-eight manholes were poison baited as a result of the first treatment and thirty-five manholes as a result of the second treatment.

WASPS' NESTS

Three hundred and forty wasps' nests were destroyed during the year.

HOUSING

Statistics for the Year 1959.

New Houses completed—284.

New Flats completed—92.

Additional units of accommodation provided by conversions	8
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I.—Inspection.

Number of dwelling houses inspected	969
Number of dwelling houses found to be unfit for human habitation	21
Number of dwelling houses found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ..	510

II.—Number of defective houses rendered fit by Informal Action	466
--	-----

III.—Action under Statutory Powers.

A. Under Sects. 9 and 10, Housing Act, 1957—	
Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served for repairs	—
Number rendered fit—	
(a) By owners	—
(b) By Local Authority in default	—

B. Under Public Health Acts—	
Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served for repairs	29
Number complied with—	
(a) By owners	33
(b) By Local Authority in default	—

C. Proceedings under Sections 16 and 17 of the Housing Act, 1957—

(1) Number of undertakings not to re-let given by owners	10
(2) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	3
(3) Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	6

D. Proceedings under Section 18 of the Housing Act, 1957 —

RENT ACT, 1957

Part I—Applications for Certificates of Disrepair.

Number of applications for certificates	5
Number of decisions not to issue certificates	Nil
Number of decisions to issue certificates	5
(a) in respect of some but not all defects	3
(b) in respect of all defects	2
Number of undertakings given by landlords under paragraph 5 of the First Schedule	Nil
Number of undertakings refused by Local Authority under proviso to paragraph 5 of the First Schedule	Nil
Number of Certificates issued	4

Part II—Applications for Cancellation of Certificates.

Application by landlords to Local Authority for cancellation of certificates	8
Objections by tenants to cancellation of certificates ..	1
Decisions by Local Authority to cancel in spite of tenants' objection	Nil
Certificates cancelled by Local Authority	7

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

Proceedings were taken against owners in two instances for failing to comply with the requirements of Statutory Notices. In one case a Nuisance Order was made and in the second case an adjournment was obtained on the information that the work would be put in hand forthwith.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

The number of inspections of food premises and the improvements recorded are shown in the following table :

	<i>Premises</i>					<i>Inspections</i>
Slaughterhouses	1,147
Bakehouses	65
Dairies and Milk Shops	100
Provision Shops	331
Fish Shops—Wet	45
Fish Shops—Fried	55
Butcher's Shops	252
Hotels and Restaurants	317
Canteens and Hospital Kitchens	91

Repairs or improvements carried out :

Constant hot water supply provided .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	14
Handbasins or sinks provided .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	16
Walls—Repaired, decorated or cleansed .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	70
Ceilings—Repaired, decorated or cleansed .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	62
Floors—New, repaired, decorated or cleansed .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	16
Water closets—New, repaired or cleansed .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	41
Water closets—" Wash your hands " notices .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	20
Refuse receptacles provided .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	30
Extract Fans .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	9
Nailbrushes .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	14
First Aid Equipment .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	16
Miscellaneous .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	82

MEAT INSPECTION

There are five licensed slaughterhouses in the Borough, four of which are in regular use. All animals slaughtered were examined for evidence of disease by the Public Health Inspectors.

Carcases and Offal Inspected and Condemned in whole or in part :

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed (if known)	4,638	250	250	10,667	8,710	—
Number inspected ..	4,638	250	250	10,667	8,710	—
All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticercus :						
Whole carcasses condemned ..	2	—	—	4	12	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ..	1,358	23	1	74	223	—
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticercus	29.32 %	9.20 %	.40 %	.73 %	2.69 %	—
Tuberculosis only :						
Whole carcasses condemned ..	—	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ..	57	—	—	—	78	—
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis ..	1.23 %	—	—	—	.89 %	—
Cysticercosis :						
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ..	1	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration ..	1	—	—	—	—	—
Generalised and totally condemned	—	—	—	—	—	—

Parts of Carcases or Organs Condemned

	Beasts including Cows	Calves	Sheep	Pigs	Total
	lb.	lb.	lb.	lb.	lb.
Parts of Carcases	100	—	1	1,203	1,304
Organs	15,468	2	195	549	16,214

In addition to the above, 410 lb. of Imported Beef and 30 lb. of Imported Pork were condemned.

The total weight of meat condemned as unfit for human consumption was:

9 tons 6 cwts. 0 qrs. 5 lb.

Unsound meat was collected by a local firm engaged in the manufacture of commercial grease.

Other Food Inspection

<i>Type of Food</i>								<i>Weight in lb.</i>
Butter .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Cheese .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	198
Bacon .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	179
Ham .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	119
Sausages .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	110
Sausage Meat .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
Corned Beef .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14
Turkey .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14
Rabbit .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	15
Sultanas .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
Rice .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	112
Confectionery .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	56
Fish .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,164
Other Foods .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10
								<hr/> 2,005 <hr/>

The total weight of meat and other foods listed above unfit for human food and condemned was:

10 tons 3 cwts. 3 qrs. 22 lb.

In addition the following foods were condemned:

Tinned Milk .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	209 Tins
Other Tinned Goods .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,977 Tins
Packeted Foods .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	852 Pkts.
Bottled Foods .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	254 Bots.
Hamburgers .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	75
Pork Pies .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Chickens .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Fish Cakes .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	17
Cucumbers .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	5

All condemned food other than unsound meat was destroyed by the Cleansing Department.

MILK AND DAIRIES ORDERS AND REGULATIONS

There are 5 dairies and 73 distributors on the register, and during the year 100 inspections of premises were made.

Milk (Special Designation) (Raw Milk) Regulations, 1949-1954

Milk (Special Designation) (Pasteurised and Sterilised Milk) Regulations, 1949-1953

Licences issued for Sale of Graded Milk

Pasteurised	27
Tuberculin Tested	24
Pasteurised, Producer	2
Sterilised	40
Supplementary	17

Pasteurised and Sterilised Milk

During the year 148 samples of pasteurised milk were submitted for examination and of these 141 samples satisfied the required tests. The tests on the remaining 7 were declared void by reason of the atmospheric shade temperature exceeding 65 degrees F.

Of the 148 samples taken, 126 were of milk pasteurised in Colchester, the remaining 22 being of milk pasteurised outside the Borough and brought in for retail sale.

MILK—BIOLOGICAL TEST

Seventeen samples of milk were submitted to the biological test for the presence of tubercle bacillus and all were negative.

LIQUID EGG

Thirty-one samples of liquid egg broken out in a local establishment were taken for examination. All were very satisfactory and no evidence of Salmonella was found.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1955

Samples	No. of Samples	Samples below Standard	Nature of Deficiency
Milk	56		
Full Cream Milk, canned ..	2		
Double Cream	2		
Single Cream	1		
Cream, canned	3		
Butter	4	1	See next page
Margarine	4		
Lard	3		
Shredded Beef Suet	2		
Cheese Spread	2		
Corned Beef	1		
Sugar	1		
Icing Sugar	1		
Pork Luncheon Meat ..	2		
Sausages	2		
Stewed Steak, canned ..	1		
Meat Paste	1		
Peas, canned	1		
Currants	2		
Sultanas	2		
Mincemeat	3		
Ground Almonds	2		
Marzipan	1		
Honey	1		
Flour	2		
Creamed Rice	3		
Jam	3		
Lemon Curd	3		
Tomato Juice	1		
Pineapple Juice	1		
Soft Drink	4	1	See next page
Lemonade Powder	1		
Ice Cream	6		
Custard Powder	1		
Peaches, canned	2		
Dried Yeast	1		
Bread	3	2	See next page
Soup	2		
Vinegar	3		
Olive Oil	1		
Tincture of Quinine	1	1	See next page
Glycerine of Thymol	1		
Zinc and Castor Oil Cream ..	1		
Bananas	1		
	141	5	

OBSERVATIONS

Sample No. 44—A complaint was received concerning a bottle of soft drink which had an unpleasant flavour. The Analyst reported that the unpleasant flavour was due to the drink being filled into a bottle which had been used for holding a liquid disinfectant and not completely cleaned. The matter was taken up with the firm concerned and a letter of caution sent by the Town Clerk.

Sample No. 116—A sample of Ammoniated Tincture of Quinine was found to be deficient in ammonia to the extent of 41 per cent of the minimum amount that should be present. The matter was taken up with the seller and a fresh supply obtained. A small quantity of existing stock was discarded.

Bread—A complaint was received concerning a loaf of bread in which a dead wasp had been found. The matter was investigated and the firm concerned advised as to precautions to be taken.

Bread—A complaint was received concerning a wrapped loaf of sliced brown bread many of the slices of which were coloured salmon-pink. The Analyst reported the colouration to be caused by the mycelium and spores of a mould. A copy of the report was forwarded to the Authority for the area in which the bread was baked.

Butter—A complaint was received that a small piece of wood had been found in a packet of pre-packed butter. The complaint was referred to the Local Authority in whose area the butter was packed.

Ice Cream (Heat Treatment, etc.) Regulations

Visits to premises where ice cream is manufactured or sold	301
Samples taken	23
Results of samples—Grade I	14
Grade II	8
Grade III	1
Grade IV	—

JOHN D. KERSHAW, M.D., D.P.H.,

*Medical Officer of Health
of the Borough of Colchester.*

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
TRINITY STREET.

